

2008 Western Regional Heritage Conference

Field Trips

Cost - \$35 per person

Field trips will be held on Monday, April 14th. Please see descriptions for the field trips, including logistical information below. Don't forget to register for the field trip of your choice on the online registration form.

I. Pine Hill Ecological Reserve – Melanie Gogol-Prokurat and Todd Keeler-Wolf, (Senior Vegetation Ecologist, Biogeographic Data Branch, California Department of Fish and Game), will lead a trip to the Pine Hill Ecological Reserve. Pine Hill is in the Central Sierra Nevada Foothills of western El Dorado County. The collection of eight rare plant species found at Pine Hill grow in a roughly oval area centering around Green Valley Road stretching from Folsom Lake in the north to Highway 50 in the south. Three of these rare plants are endemic to the Pine Hill region. Another two species are nearly endemic, with only a few small colonies of the plants found elsewhere. This assemblage of rare species is part of a unique plant community that has been termed Northern Gabbroic Chaparral.

The area has benefited from detailed vegetation and floristic studies. Melanie Gogol-Prokurat has conducted her graduate thesis research on the rare plants of the area and Todd Keeler-Wolf has been involved in sampling and classifying the vegetation of the area and the surrounding foothills.

Topics will include: geological origins, distinctive vegetation and flora, and management to promote the natural biodiversity of the area. The area is also surrounded by interior live and blue oak woodland habitat. Those interested in the animal life of the area should be able to see many species of birds and other diurnal vertebrates typical of the central Sierra Foothills.

Logistics: Participants will leave and return to the Granlibakken Resort at Lake Tahoe. People can travel either by personal car or in our rented vehicle. The field trip leader will likely meet the group in Sacramento County, location to be determined; directions will be provided. Tentative departure time will be 8:30am. Return time late afternoon of the same day. Lunch will be provided.

What to bring: Sturdy shoes (running shoes are fine unless it's raining), appropriate all weather gear if it's raining, hat, sunscreen, bug repellent. Optional: camera, binoculars, hand lens, notebook, sunglasses.

II. Vernal Pools of Northern Central Valley – Roxanne Bittman, Botanist, California Natural Diversity Database, will lead a trip to visit some vernal pools in the northern Central Valley, in Sacramento County. The actual location depends

on the developing flowering season and will be announced later. The site will have some beautiful flowers as well as interesting conservation issues associated with it.

The trip will feature a presentation by Niall McCarten, a local consultant and ecologist with two decades of experience in this habitat. Topics will include a review of general pool ecology and distribution, rare species biology (plant and animal) and an introduction to some exciting new research on vernal pool hydrology. There will be plenty of time to admire the beauty of the situation.

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III. Southern Placer County Birds – Darlene McGriff, Senior Biologist Specialist, California Dept. Fish & Game, Biogeographic Data Branch, California Natural Diversity Database, will take folks to the vicinity of Folsom Lake or along the Highway 80 corridor in southern Placer County. There are many places to bird in south Placer County. Depending on the location, birds that we may see include Phainopepla, Oak titmouse, California thrasher, Nuttall's woodpecker, Acorn woodpecker, various other species of hummingbirds, wrens, and sparrows just to name a few. We may also include stops to see yellow-billed magpies and tricolored blackbirds too.

Logistics: TBD